

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 07077 300616Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 DHA-02  
TRSE-00 /071 W

-----300619Z 028265 /12

R 291611Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9636  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

UNCLAS THE HAGUE 7077

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, NL  
SUBJ: VAN AGT IN TROUBLE OVER MENTEN-AGAIN

REF: THE HAGUE 7022

1. ONCE AGAIN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS'S LIST -LEADER ANDREAS VAN AGT HAS MADE HIMSELF VULNERABLE TO ATTACKS FROM BOTH THE LEFT AND THE RIGHT OVER HIS HANDLING OF THE PIETER MENTEN AFFAIR. THE LATEST FLAP CONCERNS VAN AGT'S APPOINTMENT OF HISTORIAN DR. H.J. SCHEFFER TO HEAD THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF THE MENTEN CASE, AFTER TWO OTHER CANDIDATES HAD REFUSED THE JOB. SCHEFFER, THE DUTCH PRESS REPORTED, WAS HIMSELF CONVICTED OF A WAR RELATED CRIME. IN 1951, A COURT-MARTIAL GAVE HIM A ONE-YEAR SUSPENDED SENTENCE FOR HIS PART IN THE REVENGE KILLING, ONE MONTH AFTER THE END OF THE WAR OF A 25-YEAR OLD WOMAN SUSPECTED OF BETRAYING RESISTANCE FIGHTERS TO THE GESTAPO. THIS HAS RAISED THE QUESTION WHETHER SCHEFFER IS CAPABLE OF CONDUCTING AN UNBIASED INVESTIGATION OF A CASE CONCERNING NAZI ATROCITIES.

2. TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE VAN AGT SAID HE FAILED TO UNDERSTAND  
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WHAT SCHEFFER MEANT WHEN THE LATTER MENTIONED HIS WAR PAST DURING THEIR INITIAL MEETING. THIS PROMPTED THE LARGE CIRCULATION DAILY ALGEMEEN DAGBLAD TO BANNER ITS FRONT-PAGE WITH "VAN AGT BEWILDERED."

3. COMMENT: THE APPOINTMENT OF SCHEFFER TO SUCH A POLITICALLY AND

EMOTIONALLY SENSITIVE POST WITHOUT A THOROUGH BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION WAS A SERIOUS FAUX PAS FOR VAN AGT, AND WILL FURTHER BRING HIS JUDGMENT INTO QUESTION. DESPITE THE UNEASE WHICH VAN AFT'S CONTINUING MISADVENTURES MUST BE CAUSING HIS CDA COLLEAGUES, THEY HAVE SO FAR MAINTAINED AN OUTWARD SHOW OF SUPPORT FOR THE LEADING CANDIDATE OF THEIR NEW PARTY.

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## Message Attributes

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